

The sky was dark with rain clouds, and a brisk fall breeze moved the treetops as they walked home from school. Katie, Mary, John, and Charlie lived on Hampton Avenue and attended the same school. They were excited on this particular afternoon because it was Halloween afternoon and soon it would be Halloween night!

The gang had spent weeks planning their costumes and had designed disguises that were sure to fool all the neighbors. Katie had made a glamorous dress from some old drapes and was going to be a movie star or Miss America, depending on how her hair turned out. Mary was going to be a vampire, Charlie a ghost, and John was dressing like Rambo.

They had agreed to meet in front of John's house at seven o'clock. It would just be getting dark by then.

When they gathered, everyone admired the others' costumes. Katie looked grownup with her lipstick, while Charlie looked like the scariest ghost from a horror movie. John was too skinny really to look like Rambo, but he had paint on his face and looked mean. The vampire was Mary, who had painted her fingernails with red polish. They all had fun getting dressed up.

They walked around the neighborhood filling their bags with candy. As usual, Mrs. Smith had made candy apples and popcorn balls. They were always delicious. On the other hand, Mr. Franks gave out yucky candy in yellow and black wrappers.

The wind was blowing stronger and making eerie noises as they approached the Marsten house. The group began to walk slower. They stood more closely together. They all had heard the rumors. Years ago the authorities had discovered Mr. Marsten chained to a bed in the

attic. Mrs. Marsten had been keeping him a prisoner. Since then, he had been moved to a home for the elderly. Mrs. Marsten, though, still lived in the old house. It was now overgrown with weeds, and an iron door had been placed in the front. Mrs. Marsten was rarely seen by anyone.

They had planned to pass by the house without looking. They could not resist, however, and they peered down her driveway. The house was pitch black dark. If a light was on in the house, it could not be seen from the street. Suddenly, a scream! They all tore down the road back to John's house, some even dropping their bags of candy. They fell onto the grass, out of breath. No one knew who had screamed or what had happened. Scary things occur on Halloween night!

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